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Stacy, Jason, ed., Walt Whitman, Leaves of Grass, 1860: The 150th Anniversary Facsimile Edition [review]

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REVIEW

WALT WHITMAN. *Leaves of Grass, 1860: The 150th Anniversary Facsimile Edition*. Ed. Jason Stacy. Iowa City: University of Iowa Press, 2009. lvii + 489 pp.

Leaves of Grass, 1860: The 150th Anniversary Facsimile Edition is a welcome addition to any Whitman scholar's library, especially now that the Roy Harvey Pearce 1961 Cornell University Press facsimile has been out of print for so many years. The handsome Iowa paperback publication can be adopted for use in senior seminars and graduate classes, and, in this sesquicentennial of the 1860 edition, it might also be an appropriate choice for any course devoting a significant amount of time to Whitman. Although the various true facsimiles of the first (1855) edition and the one facsimile of the second (1856) edition of *Leaves* are also out of print, it is possible, through second-hand bookshops, to own facsimiles of the first, second, and third volumes of what Whitman once termed a "language experiment." Stacy's facsimile edition of the 1860 volume, unlike the Pearce edition, unfortunately lacks an index of titles and first lines. Yet, happily, unlike the Pearce edition, it does offer a useful glossary of the poet's "occasionally obscure or archaic language."

In the introduction to this facsimile, Jason Stacy follows the lead of Pearce in his introduction to the 1961 facsimile by using Whitman's notebook entries about writing a new American bible to argue for the poet's shift of focus, however slight, as the nation headed irrevocably towards Civil War. For Pearce, the key notebook entry was about "The Great Construction of the New Bible It ought to be ready in 1859" (quoted in Pearce, xix). For Stacy, it is two rather contrary phrases: "Founding a new American/Religion (? No religion)" (quoted in Stacy, xx). Pearce's new religion becomes Stacy's "no religion," but both indicate that Whitman sought a more secular religion to fit with American democracy. This new religion was really a New York version of New England Transcendentalism in which the body played a larger role than simply the means to a spiritual end. "Lack one lacks both," Whitman had written in the 1855 version of what became "Song of Myself."

It is here, I think, that Stacy, who is a historian, misses the point. He sees Whitman as taking advantage of the democratized bibles that dispense with the need for critical training in formal exegesis, thereby transforming the "doctrinal" into the "imaginative." All this may be so, because Whitman did not write in isolation (he was no "solitary singer"), but Whitman's "bible," or the primary source of his literary vision, was Emerson. "I was simmering, simmering, simmering," the poet is alleged to have declared in the year of the 1860 edition; "Emerson brought me to a boil." As Pearce observes: "The Whitman of the 1860 edition is, par excellence, Emerson's 'secretary,' reporting 'the doings of the miraculous spirit of life that everywhere throbs and works.'" When Stacy does discuss Emerson and that other giant Transcendentalist, Henry

David Thoreau, he does so in the context of John Brown's visit to Concord, prior to his infamous raid on Harper's Ferry. He might have pointed out that while both were political activists to a degree on the question of slavery, they also had doubts about Brown. Thoreau was inquisitive during Brown's visit to Concord of exactly what he was going to do with the money he was soliciting. Emerson in a speech following Brown's execution on December 2, 1859, did say that the martyr (and murderer, in Kansas) would make "the gallows glorious like the Cross," but he removed this phrase when he published the speech.

Stacy, however, goes beyond Pearce in an illuminating way to suggest in some detail how indeed Whitman tried to make his third edition "biblical." It was in this edition that Whitman started putting his poems in clusters, but Stacy also points out that the poet numbered the verses within these clusters in "a fashion that mimicked the typography in Bibles and invited citations similar to scripture." He also points out that Whitman replaced the biblical calendar with the American one, "dating his book 'Year 85 of The States,'" thus "positing that the origin of significant historical chronology is, instead of Christ's birth, now set as July 4, 1776." Further, he shows how Whitman dropped hints in the new edition about his disapproval of slavery and his encouragement of the "nativeness" in the intimate connection between individuals in a democracy. "Whitman's chants of organic democracy," Stacy writes, "revealed an eternal nation beneath the fractured and failing Union."

Since Stacy's facsimile does not include an index of titles, it might be useful to append to this review, as a supplement to the new facsimile, a list tracing the evolution of Whitman's poems through the first three editions, in order to place the 1860 arrangement in a clearer perspective. When I wrote *Walt Whitman: The Song of Himself* (1999), I mapped out the evolution of *Leaves of Grass* through all the editions and issues during Whitman's lifetime. I was hoping to include it as an appendix to the biography, but I dropped it when my publisher threatened to reduce the type size from twelve-point to ten. Now, in reduced type size, here is the list up through the 1860 edition.

LEAVES OF GRASS—FIRST EDITION (1855). Twelve untitled poems (the first six carrying the repeated "Leaves of Grass" in place of a title), noted by asterisk in the following lists of poems in the second and third editions.

LEAVES OF GRASS—SECOND EDITION (1856). 1. *"Poem of Walt Whitman, an American" ["Song of Myself" in 1881]; 2. "Poem of Women" ["Unfolded Out of the Folds" in 1871]; 3. "Poem of Salutation" ["Salut au Monde!" in 1860]; 4. *"Poem of The Daily Work of The Workmen and Workwomen of These States" ["A Song for Occupations" in 1881]; 5. "Broad-Axe Poem" ["Song of the Broad-Axe" in 1867]; 6. *"Poem of A Few Greatnesses" ["Great Are the Myths" in 1867]; 7. *"Poem of The Body" ["I Sing the Body Electric" in 1867]; 8. "Poem of Many In One" [Parts of the 1855 Preface, "By Blue Ontario's Shores" in 1881]; 9. "Poem of Wonder at The Resurrection of The Wheat" ["This Compost" in 1867]; 10. "Poem of You, Whoever You Are" ["To You" ("Whoever you are . . . ") in 1871]; 11. "Sun-Down Poem" ["Crossing Brooklyn Ferry" in 1860]; 12. "Poem of The Road" ["Song of the Open Road" in 1867]; 13. "Poem of Procreation" ["A Woman Waits for Me" in 1867]; 14.

*“Poem of The Poet” [Part 1 of “Song of the Answerer” in 1881]; 15. “Clef Poem” [“On the Beach at Night Alone” in 1871]; 16. * “Poem of The Dead Young Men of Europe, the 72d and 73d Years of These States” [“Resurgemus,” New York *Tribune*, June 21, 1850; and “Europe, The 72d and 73d Years of These States” in 1860]; 17. “Poem of The Heart of The Son of Manhattan Island” [“Excelsior” in 1867]; 18. “Poem of The Last Explanation of Prudence” [Parts of the 1855 Preface, “Song of Prudence” in 1881]; 19. “Poem of The Singers, and of The Words of Poems” [Part 2 of “Song of the Answerer” in 1881]; 20. “Faith Poem” [“Assurances” in 1867]; 21. “Liberty Poem for Asia, Africa, Europe, America, Australia, Cuba, and The Archipelagoes of the Sea” [To a Foil’d European Revolutionaire” in 1871]; 22. * “Poem of Apparitions in Boston, the 78th Year of These States” [“A Boston Ballad” in 1871]; 23. “Poem of Remembrances for A Girl or A Boy of These States” [“Think of the Soul” in 1871. Excluded from *Leaves of Grass* after 1876 impression]; 24. “Poem of Perfect Miracles” [“Miracles” in 1867]; 25. * “Poem of The Child That Went Forth, and Always Goes Forth, Forever and Forever” [“There Was A Child Went Forth” in 1871]; 26. * “Night Poem” [“The Sleepers” in 1871]; 27. * “Poem of Faces” [“Faces” in 1871]; 28. “Bunch Poem” [“Spontaneous Me” in 1867]; 29. * “Lesson Poem” [“Who Learns My Lesson Complete?” in *Passage to India*]; 30. “Poem of The Propositions of Nakedness” [“Respondez!” in 1867 and excluded after 1876, with parts making up “Reversals” and “Transpositons” in 1881]; 31. “Poem of The Sayers of The Words of The Earth” [“Song of the Rolling Earth” in 1881]; 32. “Burial Poem” [“To Think of Time” in 1871].

LEAVES OF GRASS—THIRD EDITION (1860). [With this edition, Whitman began arranging his poems in “clusters,” his term; see *Leaves of Grass: A Textual Variorum of the Printed Poems*, ed. Sculley Bradley, Harold W. Blodgett, Arthur Golden, William White (New York: New York University Press, 1980), 1:lvii-lxxv.]

“Proto-Leaf” [“Starting from Paumanok” in 1867]

*“Walt Whitman” [Opening poem in 1855; No. 1 in 1856; “Song of Myself” in 1881]

“CHANTS DEMOCRATIC and Native American.”

“Apostroph” (excluded after 1860, but see “O Sun of Real Peace” in *Leaves of Grass*, 1867) + Numbers 1 to 21: No. 1 is adapted from * “Poem of Many In One” (No. 8 in 1856); No. 2 is from “Broad-Axe Poem” (No. 5 in 1856); ‘No. 3 is from * “Poem of The Daily Work of The Workmen and Workwomen of These States” (No. 4 in 1856); No. 4 is “Our Old Feuillage” in 1881; No. 5 is from “Poem of the Propositions of Nakedness” (No. 30 in 1856); No. 6 is from “Poem of Remembrances for a Girl or Boy of These States” (No. 23 in 1856); No. 7 is “You and Me and To-day” in the *Saturday Press*, January 14, 1860, and “With Antecedents” in 1867; No. 8 is “Song at Sunset” in 1881; No. 9 combined with No. 11 to form “Thoughts” (“Of these years . . .”) in SONGS BEFORE PARTING supplement in 1867, then in “Songs Before Parting” section in 1871; No. 10 is “To A Historian” in 1871; No. 11 (same as No. 9 above); No. 12 is “Vocalism,” Part I, in 1881; No. 13 is “Laws for Creations” in 1871; No. 14 is “Poets to Come” in 1871; No. 15 from “Poem of The Heart of The Son of Manhattan Island” (No. 17 in 1856); No. 16 is “Mediums” in *Passage to India*; No. 17 is “On Journeys Through the States,” in *Passage to India*; No. 18 is “Me Imperturbe” in 1867; No. 19 is “I Was

Looking a Long While" in 1881; No. 20 is "I Hear America Singing" in 1867; No. 21 is "As I Walk These Broad Majestic Days" in 1871

"LEAVES OF GRASS, Numbers 1 to 24.

No. 1 is "Bardic Symbols" in the *Atlantic Monthly*, April, 1860, with the restoration of two lines editor James Russell Lowell excised, "As I Ebb'd with the Ocean of Life" in 1881; No. 2 is *"Poem of a Few Greatnesses" (No. 6 in 1856); No. 3 is adapted from *"Poem of The Poet" (No. 14 in 1856); No. 4 is "Poem of Wonder at The Resurrection of The Wheat" (No. 9 in 1856); No. 5 is *"Poem of The Last Explanation of Prudence" (No. 18 in 1856); No. 6 is "Poem of The Singers, and of the Words of Poems" (No. 19 in 1856); No. 7 is "Faith Poem" (No. 20 in 1856); No. 8 is adapted from "Poem of Perfect Miracles" (No. 24 in 1856); No. 9 is *"Poem of The Child That Went Forth, and Always Goes Forth, Forever and Forever" (No. 25 in 1856); No. 10 became "Myself and Mine" in *Passage to India*; No. 11 is *"Lesson Poem" (No. 29 in 1856); No. 12 is "Clef Poem" (No. 15 in 1856); No. 13 became "You Felons on Trial in Courts" in 1867; No. 14 is "Poem of Women" (No. 2 in 1856); No. 15 is "Night on the Prairies" in 1871; No. 16 is "The World Below the Brine" in *Passage to India*; No. 17 is "I Sit and Look Out" in 1871; No. 18 is "All Is Truth" in 1871; No. 19 is "Germs" in 1871; No. 20, "So Far, and So Far, and on toward the End," was excluded after 1860; No. 21 is "Vocalism," Part 2 in 1881; No. 22 is "What Am I After All" in *Passage to India*; No. 23 is "Locations and Times" in *Passage to India*; No. 24, "To the Reader at Parting," was excluded after *Passage to India*; "Salut au Monde!" ["Poem of Salutation" (No. 3 in 1856)] "Poem of Joys" ["A Song of Joys" in 1881] "A Word Out of the Sea" ["A Child's Reminiscence" in the *Saturday Press*, December 24, 1859; "Out of the Cradle Endlessly Rocking" in 1871] *"Leaf of Faces" ["Poem of Faces" (No. 27 in 1856)] *"Europe, the 72d and 73d of Years These States" ["Poem of The Dead Young Men of Europe, the 72d and 73d Years of These States" (No. 16 in 1856)]

"ENFANS d'ADAM," Numbers 1 to 15.

No. 1 became "To the Garden, the World" in 1867; No. 2 became "From Pent-up Aching Rivers" in 1867; No. 3 came from *"Poem of the Body" (No. 7 in 1856); No. 4 came from "Poem of Procreation" (No. 13 in 1856); No. 5 came from "Bunch Poem" (No. 28 in 1856); No. 6 became "One Hour to Madness and Joy" in 1867; No. 7 became "We Two, How Long We Were Fool'd" in 1867; No. 8 became "Native Moments" in 1867; No. 9 became "Once I Pass'd Through a Populous City" in 1867; No. 10 became "Facing West from California's Shores" in 1867; No. 11, "In the New Garden," was excluded after 1860; No. 12 became "Ages and Ages Returning at Intervals" in 1867; No. 13 became "O Hymen! O Hymeneel!" in 1867; No. 14 became "I Am He That Aches with Love," in 1867; No. 15 in the *Saturday Press* of February 11, 1860, became "As Adam Early in the Morning" in 1867; "Poem of the Road" ["Poem of the Road" (No. 12 in 1856)]; "To the Sayers of Words" ["Poem of The Sayers of The Words of The Earth" (No. 31 in 1856)]; *"A Boston Ballad, the 78th Year of These States" ["Poem of Apparitions in Boston, the 78th Year of These States" (No. 22 in 1856)]

"CALAMUS," Numbers 1 to 45.

No. 1 became "In Paths Untrodden" in 1867; No. 2 became "Scented Herbage of My Breast" in 1867; No. 3 became "Whoever you are Holding Me now in Hand" in

1867; No. 4 became "These, I, Singing in Spring" in 1867; No. 5 was subsequently distributed: stanzas 1-12 were rearranged, with additions, to make the *Drum-Taps* poem "Over the Carnage Rose Prophetic a Voice"; the last three stanzas became "A Song" in 1867 and "For You O Democracy" in 1881; No. 6 became "Not Heaving from my Ribb'd Breast only" in 1867; No. 7 became "Of the Terrible Doubt of Appearances" in 1867; No. 8, "Long I Thought that Knowledge Alone Would Suffice," and No. 9, "Hours Continuing Long," were excluded after 1860; No. 10 became "Recorders Ages Hence" in 1867; No. 11 became "When I Heard at the Close of the Day" in 1867; No. 12 became "Are you the New Person Drawn Toward me?" in 1867; No. 13 became "Roots and Leaves Themselves Alone" in 1867; No. 14 became "Not Heat Flames up and Consumes" in 1867; No. 15 became "Trickle Drops" in 1867; No. 16 "Who is Now Reading This?" was excluded after 1860; No. 17: "Of Him I love Day and Night" in the *Saturday Press*, January 28, 1860, and in 1867; No. 18 became "City of Orgies" in 1867; No. 19 became "Behold this Swarthy Face" in 1867; No. 20 became "I saw in Louisiana a Live-Oak Growing" in 1867; No. 21 became "That Music Always Round Me" in 1867 (see also *Saturday Press*, Feb. 11, 1860); No. 22 became "To a Stranger" in 1867; No. 23 became "This Moment, Yearning and Thoughtful" in 1867; No. 24 became "I hear it was Charged Against Me" in 1867; No. 25 became "The Prairie-Grass Dividing" in 1867; No. 26 became "We Two Boys Clinging Together" in 1867; No. 27 became "O Living Always—Always Dying" in 1867; No. 28 became "When I Peruse the Conquer'd Flame" in 1867; No. 29 became "A Glimpse" in 1867; No. 30 became "A Promise to California" in 1867; the first four lines of No. 31 became "Here, Sailor!" in 1867, and the last four lines became "What Place is Besieged?" in 1867 (Final title: "What Ship Puzzled Here?"); No. 32 became "What Think You, I Take My Pen in Hand" in 1867; No. 33 became "No Labor-Saving Machine" in 1867; No. 34 became "I Dream'd in a Dream" in 1867; No. 35 became "To the East and to the West" in 1867; No. 36 became "Earth! my Likeness!" in *Saturday Press*, Feb. 4, 1860 and in 1867; No. 37 became "A Leaf for Hand in Hand" in 1867 (see *Saturday Press*, February 11, 1860); No. 38 became "Fast-Anchor'd, Eternal, O Love" in 1867; No. 39 became "Sometimes with One I Love" in 1867; No. 40: "That Shadow my Likeness" in the *Saturday Press* of February 4, 1860, and in 1867; No. 41 became "Among the Multitude" in 1867; No. 42 became "To a Western Boy" in 1867; No. 43 became "O You whom I often and Silently Come" in 1867; No. 44 became "Here the Frailest Leaves of Me" in 1867; No. 45 became "Full of Life, Now" in 1867; "Crossing Brooklyn Ferry" ["Sun-Down Poem" (No. 11 in 1856)]; "Longings for Home" [published under this title in the *Saturday Press* of June 9, 1860, and the *Southern Literary Messenger*, July 15, 1860; "O Magnet-South" in 1881]

"MESSENGER LEAVES"

"To You, Whoever You Are" ["Poem of You, Whoever You Are" (No. 10 in 1856)]
 "To a Foiled Revolter or Revoltress" ["Liberty Poem for Asia, Africa, Europe, America, Australia, Cuba, and the Archipelagoes of The Sea" (No. 21 in 1856)].

"To Him that was Crucified" [final title]

"To One shortly to Die" [final title]

"To a Common Prostitute" [final title]

"To Rich Givers" [final title]

"To a Pupil" [final title]

"To The States, to Identify the 16th, 17th, or 18th Presidentialiad" [final title]
 "To a Cantatrice" ["To a Certain Cantatrice" in 1867]
 "Walt Whitman's Caution" ["To The States" in 1881]
 "To a President" [final title]
 "To other Lands" ["To Foreign Lands" in 1871]
 "To Old Age" [final title]
 "To You" ["Let us twain . . . " [final title]
 "To You" ["Stranger! if you . . . ") [final title]
 "Mannahatta" [published in the *Saturday Press*, June 9, 1860; final title]
 "France, the 18th Year of These States" ["France, The 18th Year of These States" in 1867]

"THOUGHTS," Numbers 1 to 7: "Of the visage of things . . . "; "Of waters, forests, hills . . . "; "Of persons arrived . . . "; "Of ownership . . . "; "As I sit with others . . . "; "Of what I write from myself . . . "; and "Of obedience, faith, adhesiveness"

"Unnamed Lands" [final title]
 "Kosmos" [final title]
 "A Hand-Mirror" [final title]
 "Beginners" [final title]
 "Tests" [final title]
 "Savantism" [final title]
 "Perfections" [final title]
 "Says" [In 1860 numbered 1-8. Reduced to four sections in 1867-1871, where 1860 nos. 1, 5, 7, and 8 became nos. 1-4. Excluded after 1871]
 "Debris" [In 1860 seventeen untitled poems, under "Debris," separated by ornaments or pagination breaks. The poems were variously dropped after 1860, altered and dropped in 1867, or, e.g., "He Is Wisest" conflated in later editions, or dropped from 1871-1881, to reappear in SS as "Stronger Lessons"]
 "Sleep-Chasings" [from "Night Poem" in 1856; *"The Sleepers" in 1871]
 "Burial" ["Burial Poem" in 1856; *"To Think of Time" in 1871]
 "To My Soul" ["As Nearing Departure" in 1867; "As the Time Draws Nigh" in 1871]
 "So long!" [final title]

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